

Remarks

Claims 2-20 and 23-29 are pending in this application. Applicants have amended claims 2-16, 17, 19, 20, 23, and 24, presented new claims 25-29 and cancelled claim 22 to clarify the claimed invention. Applicants respectfully request favorable reconsideration of this application.

Newly presented claim 25 and the amendments to claims 15 and 19 are supported by the specification at page 8, lines 26 -34; and page 9 lines 6-11.

The rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, is moot since claim 22 is no longer pending. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of this rejection.

The Examiner rejected claims 1-20 and 22-24 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. patent 6,675,070 to Lapham.

Lapham does not suggest the invention recited in claims 2-20 and 23-29 since, among other things, Lapham does not suggest an indicator configured to indicate whether a mechanical unit, which has been selected to be manually moved based on input from a manually-operated control member, is due to the performed task associated with one of the other mechanical units, and consequently to indicate that movement of the selected mechanical unit will also result in movement of the associated mechanical unit. Nowhere does Lapham suggest such associated movement of mechanical members. Lapham only appears to illustrate two automation devices. Lapham also does not suggest automatic and manual controls. Rather, Lapham only appears to

suggest a computer for automatic control of a robot with a computer that executes a program.

On the other hand, as recited in the claims, mechanical units can be moved either automatically based on control instructions in a control program or manually based on input from a manual control. The indication is made when a mechanical unit is to be moved manually. Whether or not mechanical units are associated with each other, and accordingly whether or not the association should be indicated depends on a task that is performed. If a mechanical unit is performing a task where movements of two mechanical units are associated, the program is interrupted and one of the mechanical units is to be moved independently of the other mechanical unit, it is indicated that the mechanical unit selected to be manually moved is associated with the other mechanical unit. This permits the mechanical units to be disassociated before the selected mechanical unit is moved.

In view of the above, the reference relied upon in the office action does not suggest patentable features of the claimed invention. Therefore, the reference relied upon in the office action does not make the claimed invention obvious. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully request withdrawal of the rejections based upon the cited reference.

In conclusion, Applicant respectfully requests favorable reconsideration of this case and early issuance of the Notice of Allowance.

If an interview would advance the prosecution of this case, Applicant urges the Examiner to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The undersigned authorizes the Commissioner to charge fee insufficiency and credit overpayment associated with this communication to Deposit Account No. 22-0261.

Respectfully submitted,

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